



**About the USA – Virtual Classroom
Newsletter for English Teachers**

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“Summer of Love”

Forty years later, the ripples from the Summer of Love in San Francisco’s Haight-Ashbury are still felt in U.S. culture — although the events of that famous summer went bad very quickly.

The mythology of 1967 has never disappeared. The San Francisco hippie, dancing in Golden Gate Park with flowing long hair, has become an enduring American archetype. More importantly, the rise of '60s counterculture has had a significant impact on American culture today. It resonates in strip mall yoga classes, pop music, visual art, fashion, attitudes toward drugs, the personal computer revolution, and the current “greening” of America. While some of the counterculture’s dreams came true, others, particularly the movement’s idealistic politics, evaporated like the sweet-smelling pot smoke that saturated the air that summer. *San Francisco Chronicle* [Full Text](#)

A “Human Be-In” on January 14, 1967 in Golden Gate Park in San Francisco started the Summer of Love. The “Human Be-In” was billed as “a Renaissance of compassion, awareness and love.” It drew up to 20,000 people. The Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane performed. Among the speakers were poet Allen Ginsberg and LSD guru Timothy Leary, who for the first time used the phrase he would make famous: “Turn on, tune in, drop out.”

The event established San Francisco as the center of the emerging counterculture of hippies and flower children. A group of activists soon formed the Council for the Summer of Love to help prepare the city for the influx of young people from across the country that was expected after schools and colleges let out for summer. But with as many as 100,000 summertime visitors looking for cheap housing and food, the city’s Haight-Ashbury district quickly degenerated from a love-in to a dirty, unsafe area. The Summer of Love ended on October 6 with the “Death of Hippie” march, a mock funeral staged in Haight-Ashbury to tell America’s flower children that they should plant themselves elsewhere. *Seattle Times* [Article](#)

PBS: American Experience - Summer of Love Companion website to a 2007 documentary about the summer of 1967, when “thousands of young people from across the country flocked to San Francisco’s Haight Ashbury district to join in the hippie experience, only to discover that what they had come for was already disappearing.” Features include an illustrated article about the San Francisco Oracle periodical, video clips of S.F. events, personal stories, teacher’s guide, and more. [Summer of Love](#)

Lasting legacy?

Decades later, the psychedelic sights and sounds of 1967 are safely ensconced as one of many pieces of baby-boomer nostalgia. The “Summer of Love” was a time when the hippie counterculture came into public awareness and the first baby boomers - the name given to the group of 78 million Americans born from 1946 to 1964 - came of age, bringing with it the seeds of social and political change.

Links Census Bureau: [Oldest Baby Boomers Turn 60!](#)
American Heritage: [Boomer Century](#)



© PBS: [Summer of Love](#)

PBS: Summer of Love - Teacher’s Guide - Provides insights into social studies topics including cultural movements and their impact on American history, California and the lure of the West, the Sixties and idealism, and more.



Be-in in San Francisco’s Golden Gate Park draws young people wearing beads and flowers, and filled with hope for change in the world. ©AP

*“If you’re going to San Francisco
Be sure to wear some
flowers in your hair ...”*

..... Written by John Phillips.
Performed by Scott McKenzie.

Members of the U.S. “Baby Boom” Turn 60 - Generation that defined American youth culture faces retirement: For some, protesting against established rules included a “hippie” lifestyle and antics that shocked the older generation in the “Summer of Love” ...



© Library of Congress: New York, Louis Automobile Parade – a favorite summer destination in the early 20th century

Summer Vacation

Summer is nice
 Summer is fun
 Summer's a time to play in the sun.
 Playing outside, playing in the pool,
 Playing in the sprinklers
 And not going to school.
 Instead of spending so many hours of
 the day
 Sitting in a classroom,
 You get to play.
 I wish that summer would never end
 And I wouldn't have to go to school
 ever again.

—Carlos B. Levey, 12
 California

TRIVIA - The average American traveler drives 284 miles each way en route to summer vacation.



Summer Reading Lists
[American Library Association](#)
[Education World](#)



OpenNet Initiative <http://opennet.net/>
According to the latest OpenNet Initiative report, at least 25 countries now apply state-mandated net filtering including Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Burma, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Morocco and Saudi Arabia.

Summer Vacation

Many nations do not give school children an American-style summer vacation. They offer no more than seven consecutive weeks of vacation while most American school districts offer up to 13 weeks. However, lately the traditional three-month school vacation has shrunk to two as many school boards extend classes deeper into June and reopen earlier in August. School officials say they need the added school time to reduce summer learning setbacks and prepare students to do well on standardized tests. Many also want students to finish fall-term final exams before the Christmas holiday. To make up for lost vacation time, they are adding one- or two-day holidays during the year.

Memorial Day, observed on the last Monday in May, is the unofficial kickoff for summer. Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is the unofficial end of summer. Peak summer travel usually occurs over the 4th of July weekend. Many high school and college students get summer jobs.

A long school summer vacation was not always a part of the American school calendar. Like working families today, new immigrant families needed a safe and affordable place for children to stay while parents worked. In large cities, children of parents who worked in factories, shops or mills learned English and other subjects during an 11-month school year. A true vacation, including staying at a nice hotel or even owning a car to get you there, was something attained only by the wealthy.

Lesson Plans

Going on Vacation: [Budgeting for a Trip](#) Grades 6–8

Applying for a Summer Job: [Applications and Interviews](#) Grades 9–12

Summer Reading

Summer is an important time for school children all over the world, to play, go on vacation, and spend time with their friends and family. But research shows that students who read during the summer do better on reading tests when they go back to school in the fall than students who did not read over the vacation. Summer reading reinforces essential language skills. If children read over the summer, they will improve their reading speed, comprehension, vocabulary and even their spelling.

In a New York Times Book Review essay, Joe Queenan points to the joy and misery of summer reading. He relates how well-meaning high school teachers sabotage summer vacations: "The gnashing of teeth never stopped the year my 15-year-old son brought home 'A Tale of Two Cities' as his summer reading assignment. According to him, the backbreaking obligation to read Charles Dickens blighted June, ravaged July and obliterated August. Thus, at back-to-school night in September, when his teacher...

Summer Bummer, Joe Queenan, *New York Times Book Review*, Jun 3, 2007, pg59 * [Download article](#)

Freedom of Expression on the Internet

The world community, worried that censorship will change the face of the internet, is beginning to address the complex issue of free access to the Internet. Amnesty International has warned that the internet "could change beyond all recognition" unless action is taken against the erosion of online freedoms. ([Article](#)) The warning came ahead of an online conference organized by Amnesty, to discuss the struggle against internet repression. During the conference victims of repression outlined their plights. (See: [Some People Think the Internet is a Bad Thing](#)) The Struggle for Freedom of Expression in Cyberspace – for webcasts and information on the conference held in early June. In 2006, Amnesty International's campaign [irrepressible.info](#) was launched to become an online information center on internet freedom.

TEACHING LITERATURE

Jhumpa Lahiri: The Namesake

"Gogol Ganguli may have been born in America, but his story begins in Calcutta where, years before he is born, his parents - Ashoke and Ashima - are brought together by their parents in an arranged marriage. "Won't he be there?" asks Ashima and their match is sealed. Ashoke is studying engineering in New York and Ashima does her best to adapt to their new life in America. Their first-born is Gogol, named for the Russian author whose books carry a special meaning for Ashoke; but, as he grows older in a country of Bob's and Charlie's and Harry's, Gogol is constantly reminded he is perceived as different." [VOA article & audio file](#)

The Namesake is "the cross-cultural, multigenerational story of a Hindu Bengali family's journey to self-acceptance in Boston. Jhumpa masterfully explores the themes of the complexities of the immigrant experience and foreignness, the clash of lifestyles, cultural disorientation, the conflicts of assimilation, the tangled ties between generations... and paints a portrait of an Indian family torn between the pull of respecting family traditions, and the American way of life. It's a tale of love, solitude and emotional upheavals with an amazing eye for detail and ironic observation." [Article](#)

Links

About.Com: [An Interview with Jhumpa Lahiri](#)

About.Com: [About Jhumpa Lahiri](#)

About.Com: Review of [The Namesake](#)

Biography Resource Center/GaleNet: [Article on Jhumpa Lahiri](#)

Literature Mentioned in The Namesake: Nikolai V. Gogol "[The Overcoat](#)"

Excerpt from the Novel

"Although it is Ashima who carries the child, he, too, feels heavy, with the thought of life, of his life and the life about to come from it. He was raised without running water, nearly killed at twenty-two. Again he tastes the dust on his tongue, sees the twisted train, the giant overturned iron wheels. None of this was supposed to happen. But no, he had survived it. He was born twice in India, and then a third time, in America. Three lives by thirty. For this he thanks his parents, and their parents, and the parents of their parents. He does not thank God; he openly reveres Marx and quietly refuses religion. But there is one more dead soul he has to thank. He cannot thank the book; the book has perished, as he nearly did, in scattered pieces, in the earliest hours of an October day, in a field 209 kilometers from Calcutta. Instead of thanking God he thanks Gogol, the Russian writer who had saved his life..."

Jhumpa Lahiri on Naming

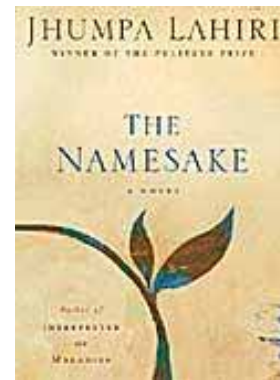
"I think," Lahiri says, "a name can be both a way in and a way out. I think it's the same thing. Because the [formal] name is your school name, the people who use it are Americans. So it becomes your American side." This, in turn, offers a vivid metaphor for immigrant life, where one exists simultaneously as part of two cultures at once.

The Search for Identity, David L. Ulin, Los Angeles Times, Oct 14, 2003.

** Order article.

Discussion Questions

- The Namesake explores the importance of names and naming practices. How and/or why was your name chosen? Does your name hold any special significance?
- How does reading and/or individual pieces of literature shape the lives of characters in the novel? How are individuals and/or societies influenced by literature? What roles do books or reading play in your life?
- At the conclusion of the book, has Gogol successfully reconciled both of the worlds he inhabits with one another? If so, how do you think he achieved this? If not, why do you think he was unable to do so?
- The Namesake raises questions about what constitutes home. Where is home for each of the characters at the conclusion of the novel? What defines home or family for you? [Source](#)



Jhumpa Lahiri: The Namesake



Jhumpa Lahiri

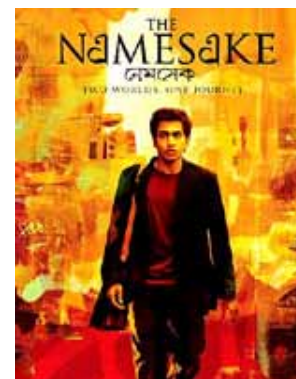
The Namesake – The Movie by Mira Nair

Accomplished and acclaimed Indian filmmaker Mira Nair's films have often crossed cultures. In the adaptation of Jhumpa Lahiri's major international bestseller *The Namesake*, Nair vividly portrays a Hindu family's reality in America. As the director herself says:

"It encompasses, in a deep humane way, the tale of millions of us who have left one home for another, who have known what it is to combine the old ways with the new world, who have left the shadow of our parents to find ourselves for the first time."

The Namesake:

[A Conversation Between Mira Nair & Jhumpa Lahiri \(video\)](#)



[Film Website](#)



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The Declaration of Independence. 1776. Copy of painting by John Trumbull, 1817-18.

Source: [Images of American Political History](#)
A collection of over 500 public domain images of American Political History.



© Johns Hopkins University

U.S. Census Bureau: [Minority Population Tops 100 Million](#): The nation's minority population reached 100.7 million, according to the national and state estimates by race, Hispanic origin, sex and age released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. A year ago, the minority population totaled 98.3 million."

Webchat Station

Fragen zu US-Aufenthalten? Chatten Sie mit uns!
Studying and Working in the U.S.

Upcoming Chats: Monday, July 9, 2007, 3-4 pm
Monday, August 13, 2007, 3-4 pm
„Kann ich das unter dem „Visa-Waiver-Programm“ als Gastzuschüler zwei Monate an einer amerikanischen Schule verbringen?“ - Nein. Ohne Visum können Sie nur als Tourist oder Geschäftsreisender einreisen. Bei einem Schulbesuch, auch wenn er kürzer als 90 Tage dauert, benötigen Sie ein Studentenvisum. [Weitere Informationen](#), Informationen zum [Studentenvisum](#)



usa.usembassy.de

About the USA is a digital collection of background resources on American society, culture, and political processes. In addition to featuring selected websites, it provides access to documents in full text format (E-Texts) on topics ranging from the history of German-American relations, government and politics to travel, holidays and sports.

This newsletter is produced by the Information Resource Centers/U.S. Diplomatic Mission to Germany.

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THIS MONTH

The Fourth of July: Independence Day

The United States celebrates its Independence Day on July 4, a day of patriotic celebration and family events throughout the country. In the words of John Adams, one of America's 'founding fathers': "The holiday would be "the great anniversary festival, [...] commemorated as the day of deliverance, [...] solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, ... from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more." The holiday is a major civic occasion, with roots deep in the Anglo-American tradition of political freedom. [USINFO article](#)

The **Library of Congress** posts a wealth of online information pertaining to the Declaration of Independence and its principal author, [Thomas Jefferson](#). [Declaring Independence: Drafting the Documents](#), provides a [Chronology of Events](#) leading up to the revolution and a [fragment](#) of an early draft of the Declaration. Also, see [The Thomas Jefferson Papers](#) which includes a [Thomas Jefferson Time Line](#).

Please see the embassy's MEET THE USA page for an article on how [Fourth of July Music Reflects U.S. History and Diversity](#).

July 11 – World Population Day: Men at Work

World Population Day aims to raise awareness about important population and development issues. In 2008, for the first time, more than half of the world's population will be living in urban areas. By 2030, towns and cities will be home to 5 billion people. The urban population of Africa and Asia will double in a generation. This unprecedented shift could enhance development and promote sustainability – or it could deepen poverty and accelerate environmental degradation.

This year's theme is "Men at Work." It highlights how men's involvement and participation can make all the difference in women's lives.

Links United Nations Population Fund: [World Population Day](#)
Census Bureau: [World Population Information](#)

The State of World Population – Unleashing the Potential of Urban Growth <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/swpmain.htm>

TALKING ABOUT MEDIA

[The Movie Business Today](#), the most recent issue of eJournal USA shows that American movies are far richer and more varied than the blockbuster stereotype would suggest.

The eJournal presents a fresh look at American movies and what they say about American society and values. The emphasis is on the film industry, including articles on film festivals, independent films, recent technological developments, foreign movies, and efforts to reduce the environmental impacts of filmmaking. It also includes a bibliography and an annotated listing of Internet resources.